

# **Governor's Advisory Commission on Aging**

## **Minutes**

**March 16, 2005**

**I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m.**

## **II. Attendance: Members Sign-In**

**Members Present: Ms. Ann Gardella, Ms. Gloria Williams, Ms. Libby Aaron, Mr. Ken Reynolds, Ms. Louise King, Rev. Paul Bliss, Ms. Nancy Pontes, Ms. Maria Matias, Mr. Joseph Brown, Sr. Marietta Walsh, Ms. Helen Friend, Dr. Herb Constantine, Mr. Joseph Corrente, Ms. Janice Zeichner, Mr. Bennett Plotkin, Ms. Esther Price, Ms. Lisa Pontarelli, Mr. Herb Weiss and Mr. Norm Chapman**

**Others in Attendance: Ms. Paula Parker (DEA), Ms. Donna Slemon (DEA) and Ms. Mary King**

**Absent: Mr. Raymond Tetreault**

**Excused: Ms. Corinne Calise Russo, Director DEA, Ms. Madeline Ernest**

## **III. Minutes**

**The minutes of the February 16, 2005 were approved.**

#### **IV. Chairperson's Report**

**Chairperson Gardella extended a welcome to all new Advisory Commission members. She stated that a nominating committee is expected to give Director Russo the Advisory Commission's Methods of Operations in May or June.**

#### **VI. Treasurer's Report**

**Esther Price reported a checking account balance of \$1.19. Donna Slemon reported that the DEA financial officer will review state procedures and the Advisory Commission status before funds are deposited in the checking account. Travel accommodations for N. E. Coalition delegates are on hold until funds are deposited.**

#### **VII. Director's Report**

**Paula Parker expressed Director Corinne Calise Russo's apologies for not attending today's meeting. The Director and senior staff are preparing for the DEA budget hearings before the House Finance Committee today at 1:00 p.m. and the Senate Finance Committee on March 17 at 1:00 p.m.**

**Paula Parker informed the Commission that new Listening Sessions are scheduled for two days in May and two days in June; all sessions**

will be held in the morning. Paula reported that the Governor's staff is very supportive about the events and their objectives. She will be meeting today with members of the work group to address planning issues for the listening sessions. Those volunteering for the work group are Ann Gardella, Tim Costa (Governor's office), Andy Gauthier (SHL), Sister Marietta Walsh, Nancy Pontes, Norm Chapman, Maria Matias and Janet Spinelli (MHRH). There will be caucuses after the listening sessions to prepare policy recommendations for the RI delegates to take to the White Conference on Aging.

### **III. Committee Reports**

**LTCCC:** Sister Walsh reported that, as a result of a monthly review of nursing home surveys, problems are more closely monitored. The Auditor General's report stated that the state does adhere to Medicare and federal inspection rules while not complying to state inspection rules. Dr. Constantine reported that the Health Department does receive federal funding for their surveyors. Also, the State needs to increase funding and personnel to complete state mandated surveys. Sister Walsh reported that the Choices Coalition is concerned that the lack of adequate funding for the community-based long term care system will result in fewer options in the community for elders. She also stated that there is a need for more affordable assisted living options.

**New England Coalition:** Sister Marietta Walsh reported that the

**Coalition will meet April 26 and 27, 2005 in Freeport, Maine. Agenda topics include Medicare Part D with the new pharmaceutical benefit and Social Security. Paula Parker stated that CMS is planning informational sessions for seniors.**

**Forum on Aging: Joe Brown reminded the members of the informational session on homeland security for seniors throughout the state. These sessions are coordinated with the Forum, DEA and Major General Reginald Centracchio. The remaining sessions will be held on March 23, 2005 (Woonsocket Senior Center), March 30, 2005 (South Kingstown Senior Center), April 5, 2005 (Cranston Senior Center) and April 7, 2005 (Warren Senior Center). Joe Brown stated that the Forum is composed of 12 senior organizations working together as one to develop and support advocacy.**

**Silver Hair Legislature: Libby Arron stated the SHL was created in 1981, composed of 75 seniors representing each legislative district in RI. Members meet monthly from September through June to advocate senior issues and legislation. However, the January and February meetings were both cancelled due to weather conditions. The SHL disseminates information through their newsletter and their website [www.rishl.org](http://www.rishl.org).**

## **IX. Old Business**

**Paula Parker stated that the Governor's Nursing Home Resident Safety Act, and a bill for the addition of a fire advocates to the Commission for the Care and Safety of the Elderly are scheduled for legislative hearings.**

## **X. New Business**

**Paula Parker announced that Older Americans Month celebrations will begin with a kick off ceremony at the Warwick Mall Food Court on Wednesday, April 27 at 8:30 a.m. The members volunteering to assist serving breakfast after the ceremony are Libby Arron, Helen Friend, Joe Brown, Ken Reynolds and Rev. Bliss.**

**A motion was made by Chairperson Gardella and seconded by Joe Brown to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m.**

**The next meeting will be held on April 20, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 73-2, second floor, building 73 of the Department of Labor and Training**

**Respectfully submitted by:**

**Donna M. Slemon**

**Assistant to the Director**

**Department of Elderly Affairs**